



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE
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Office of the Superintendent of Schools
William H. Lupini, Ed.D.

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Dear Brookline Faculty and Staff,

The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) and the Brookline Department of Public Health want to provide you with important information to help decrease the spread of flu among Brookline students and school staff during the upcoming school year. We need the assistance and cooperation of the entire school community to limit spread of flu. The flu virus can be transmitted from person to person in your home, in community settings and in schools if people infected with the virus come in very close contact with other people. There are important steps you and your students can take to minimize the risks of becoming ill with flu:

Practice good hand hygiene and cough etiquette.

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water when possible, especially after you cough or sneeze. When soap is not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be used.
- Please schedule time in the day for your students to wash their hands, particularly before meals, after bathroom visits and before/after group activities.
- Cover noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available). Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it and wash your hands.
- Remind students about good hygiene - frequent hand washing and cough etiquette.

Stay home when sick.

- Staff or students with flu-like illness (a fever with a cough or sore throat) should stay home when ill.
- Those with flu like illness should stay at home until 24 hours **after** they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. Take non-aspirin pain relievers to reduce fever and pain.

Separate ill students and staff.

- If one of your students appears to be ill, send the child to the school nurse.
- Students and staff who appear to have flu-like illness should be separated from the general school population until they can be sent home.
- Students and staff who have a fever will be asked to wear a surgical mask, if tolerated, until they leave the school.
- Never give aspirin to children or teens with fever – they can get a serious disease called Reyes syndrome.

Get a seasonal flu shot.

Vaccination against seasonal flu is very important. Schedule an appointment or attend a seasonal flu clinic where you can receive a flu shot. The H1N1 vaccine will be available for high-risk groups later in the fall.

Stay informed.

The H1N1 flu is a fluid and evolving situation. To date, most cases of H1N1 influenza have occurred in children, and most cases have fully recovered. However, influenza can cause serious illness, and cases of more severe illness may occur in the future. The following two websites which will provide updated information as available: <http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us> (Public Schools of Brookline website) and <http://www.mass.gov/dph/swineflu> (the state website).

Sincerely,

William H. Lupini, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Alan Balsam, Ph.D., MPH
Director of Public Health and Human Services